



Unitarian Universalism is a living tradition that has changed in many ways from the original Christian roots of its Universalist and Unitarian heritages, and it continues to evolve today. Most recently, this evolution has taken the form of adopting new language to describe who we are as UUs. At General Assembly in June 2024, UUs voted to replace existing Seven Principles and Six Sources language in our bylaws with language describing Unitarian Universalism through these shared values:

- **Interdependence:** We honor the interdependent web of all existence and acknowledge our place in it.
- **Pluralism:** We are all sacred beings, diverse in culture, experience, and theology.
- **Justice:** We work to be diverse multicultural Beloved Communities where all feel welcome and can thrive.
- **Transformation:** We adapt to the changing world.
- **Generosity:** We cultivate a spirit of gratitude and hope.

- **Equity:** We declare that every person is inherently worthy and has the right to flourish with dignity, love, and compassion.

We arrived at this description of Unitarian Universalism after a multi-year process of discernment and discussion, writing and revision, and eventually a final democratic vote. The process of review and revision is mandated by UUA bylaws to happen every 15 years, and the language describing Unitarian Universalist faith has changed multiple times over the course of our history. We encourage you to review [the final adopted language of Article II \(PDF, 3 pages\)](#), which includes our Shared Values. (from UUA website)

The first major rewrite of the original language, created upon the merger of the American Unitarian Association and the Universalist Association in 1961, was adopted in 1984. Some slight changes were made after that, but the language is largely unchanged. In 1961, this purpose was a dedication to key objectives, from 1985 to 2024 it has been a covenant to affirm and promote a set of principles.

1961 – *The original language for Article II in our founding bylaws.*

In accordance with these corporate purposes, the members of the Unitarian Universalist Association, dedicated to the principles of a free faith, unite in seeking:

1. To strengthen one another in a free and disciplined search for truth as the foundation of our religious fellowship;
2. To cherish and spread the universal truths taught by the great prophets and teachers of humanity in every age and tradition, immemorially summarized in the Judeo-Christian heritage as love to God and love to man;
3. To affirm, defend and promote the supreme worth of every human personality, the dignity of man, and the use of the democratic method in human relationships;
4. To implement our vision of one world by striving for a world community founded on ideals of brotherhood, justice and peace;
5. To serve the needs of member churches and fellowships, to organize new churches and fellowships, and to extend and strengthen liberal religion;
6. To encourage cooperation with men of good will in every land.

1985 – Article II revised: UUA Covenant with Principles and Sources

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote:

	1. Inherent Worth & Dignity of every person	2. Justice, Equity and Compassion in human relations	3. Acceptance of One Another and encouragement of Spiritual Growth
4. Free and responsible search for Truth & Meaning	5. The right of Conscience & use of the Democratic Process	6. The goal of world community with Peace, Liberty & Justice for all	7. Respect for the Interdependent Web of all existence of which we are a part

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

The living tradition which we share draws from many sources:

- Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life;
- Words and deeds of prophetic women and men which challenge us to confront powers and structures of evil with justice, compassion, and the transforming power of love;
- Wisdom from the world's religions which inspires us in our ethical and spiritual life;
- Jewish and Christian teachings which call us to respond to God's love by loving our neighbors as ourselves;

- Humanist teachings which counsel us to heed the guidance of reason and the results of science, and warn us against idolatries of the mind and spirit.
- Spiritual teachings of earth-centered traditions which celebrate the sacred circle of life and instruct us to live in harmony with the rhythms of nature.

Grateful for the religious pluralism which enriches and ennobles our faith, we are inspired to deepen our understanding and expand our vision. As free congregations we enter into this covenant, promising to one another our mutual trust and support.